

# Draft Environmental Assessment

## PROPOSED LAND ACQUISITION – R-3

Canyon Creek Wildlife Management Area Addition – Specimen Creek



August 2016



***Montana Fish,  
Wildlife & Parks***

# Draft Environmental Assessment

## MEPA CHECKLIST

### **PART I. PROPOSED ACTION DESCRIPTION**

**1. Type of proposed state action:**

Montana Fish, Wildlife and Parks (FWP) proposes to accept a donation of 729 acres from the Rocky Mountain Elk Foundation (RMEF) in the Robert E. Lee Range northwest of Canyon Creek, Montana. This property would be an addition to the existing Canyon Creek Wildlife Management Area (WMA).

**2. Agency authority for the proposed action:**

FWP has the authority to purchase or acquire by lease, agreement, or gift, lands that are suitable for game, bird, fish or furbearing animal restoration, propagation or protection; for public hunting, fishing, or trapping areas; and for state parks and outdoor recreation per Montana state statute 87-1-209.

The Rocky Mountain Elk Foundation (RMEF) will acquire this property, currently owned by Stimson Lumber Company, and intends to donate it to FWP. The maintenance account and other costs/fees associated with acquisition would be provided by FWP with general hunting license and Habitat Montana funds.

Per state law, 87-1-201(9) MCA, FWP is required to implement programs that address fire mitigation, pine beetle infestation, and wildlife habitat enhancement giving priority to forested lands in excess of 50 contiguous acres in any state park, fishing access site, or wildlife management area under FWP's jurisdiction. FWP would develop and implement forest management plans for this property to comply with this statute.

**3. Name, address and phone number of project sponsor (if other than the agency):**

Montana Fish, Wildlife & Parks  
Helena Area Resource Office  
PO Box 200701  
Helena, MT 59620

**4. Anticipated Schedule:**

Scoping: June 14 – July 21 2016

Public Comment Period: August 8 – September 9, 2016

Contingent on EA Decision Notice:

Submission to FWP Commission for Approval: October 2016

Submission to the Land Board for Approval: October 2016

**5. Location affected by proposed action**

The property is located about 34 miles northwest of Helena, Montana, near the town of Canyon Creek along Hwy 279. Portions of the property are both east and west of the highway, in hunting districts 339 and 343 respectively, with the far eastern property boundary adjoining the Canyon Creek WMA. The property is depicted in red in Figures 1 and 2 on pages 3 and 4.

Township 14 North, Range 6 West, P.M.M.

Section 22: SE1/4NW1/4; SW1/4SW1/4

Section 27: NW1/4; N1/2SW1/4; Portions of E1/2  
 Section 28: E1/2NE1/4; NE1/4SE1/4

**6. Project size -- estimate the number of acres that would be directly affected that are currently:**

Total acres: 729

	<u>Acres</u>		<u>Acres</u>
(a) Developed:		(d) Floodplain	<u>0</u>
Residential	<u>0</u>		
Industrial	<u>0</u>	(e) Productive:	
(existing shop area)		Irrigated cropland	<u>0</u>
(b) Open Space/	<u>0</u>	Dry cropland	<u>0</u>
Woodlands/Recreation		Forestry	<u>670</u>
(c) Wetlands/Riparian	<u>34</u>	Rangeland	<u>25</u> <sup>1</sup>
Areas		Other	<u>0</u>

**7. Permits, Funding and Jurisdiction.**

**(a) Permits:** A Montana Department of Transportation Approach Permit would be necessary if a new approach to the property is pursued after acquisition.

**(b) Funding:**  
 Donation, therefore \$0

**(c) Other Overlapping or Additional Jurisdictional Responsibilities:**  
 Board of Land Commissioners

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<sup>1</sup> Land cover data identified approximately 25 acres of sagebrush steppe, but this has not been field verified. No sagebrush was observed during several site visits. A thorough reconnaissance of the property has not been completed.



Figure 1. Specimen Creek Property and surrounding land ownership, including private lands with FWP conservation easements and public lands (U.S. Forest Service, U.S. Bureau of Land Management, FWP, and Department of Natural Resources and Conservation [State Trust]), Lewis and Clark County, Montana (2013 imagery). Land not colored is also private land, which may have conservation easements held by other entities.

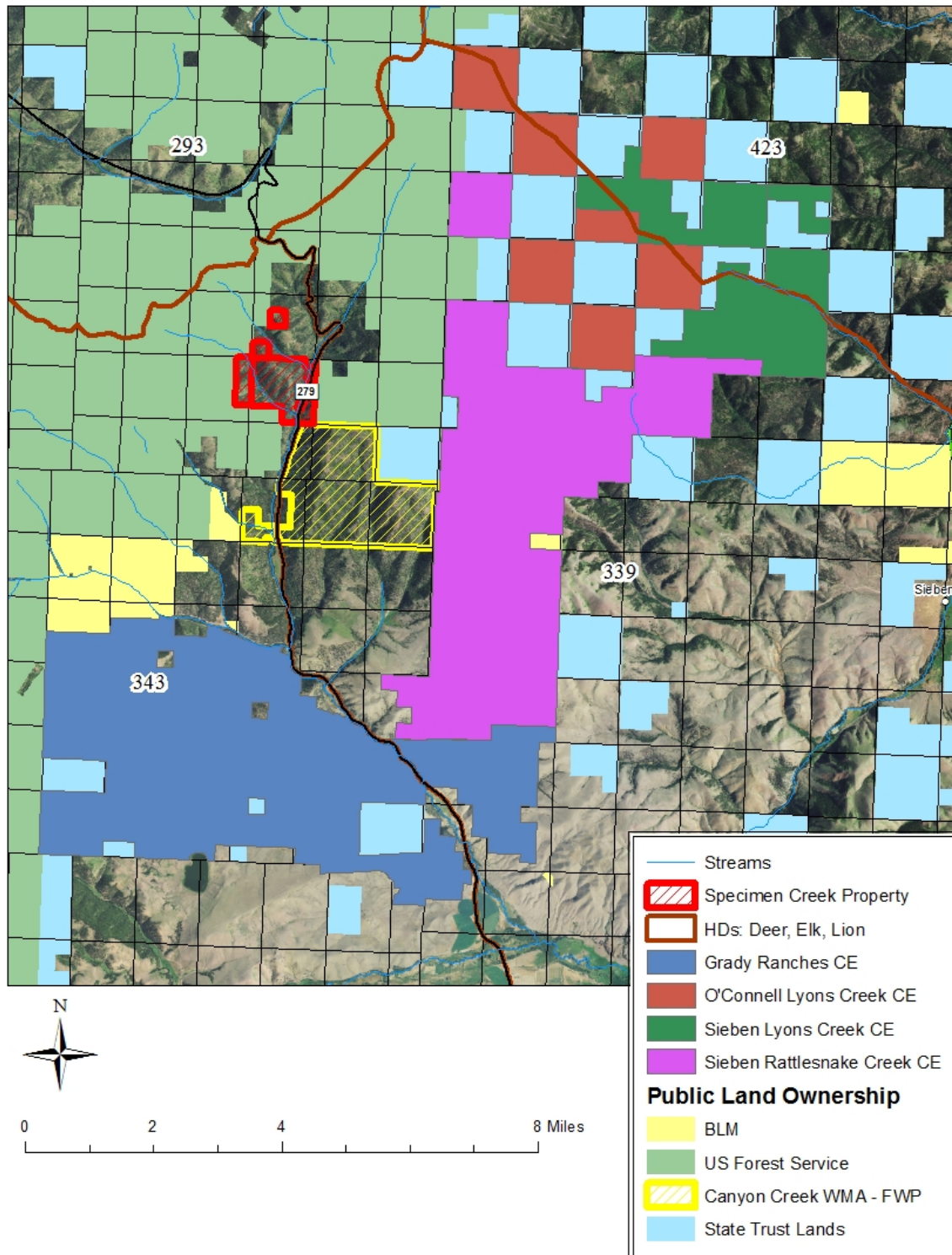
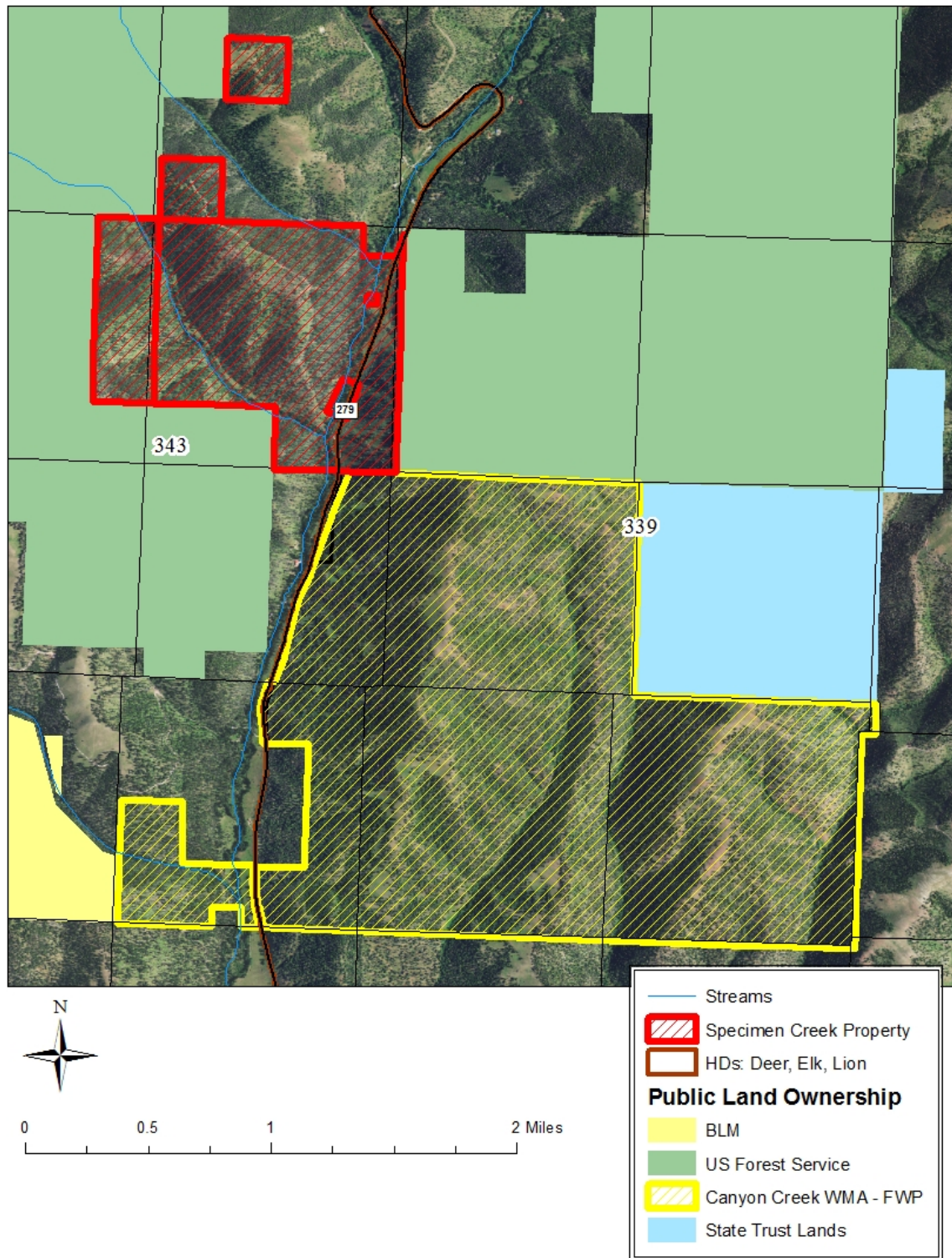


Figure 2. Specimen Creek Property and the existing Canyon Creek WMA, Lewis and Clark County, Montana (2013 imagery). Land not colored is private land.



**8. Narrative summary of the proposed action:**

Through the RMEF, Montana Fish, Wildlife and Parks (FWP) proposes to accept a donation of 729 acres from the RMEF in the Robert E. Lee Range northwest of Canyon Creek, Montana. This property would be an addition to the existing Canyon Creek WMA.

The overall objectives of the project are to:

- Maintain or improve the wildlife and fisheries values that exist on the property.
- Provide recreational opportunity on the property.
- Maintain strategic public access to adjoining public lands.
- Enhance the ability to achieve population management objectives of wildlife.

Property ownership adjacent to this parcel includes FWP, United States Forest Service (USFS), and private land (Figure 2). For the larger parcel: to the south, it adjoins the Canyon Creek WMA for ~¼ mi and private lands for ~¼ mi each; to the east and the west, it adjoins 1 mi and ~1¼ mi of USFS, respectively; and to the north, it adjoins private property. The smaller parcel adjoins USFS for ~¼ mi to the west and is surrounded by private land on all other sides.

Some areas of the nearby Helena National Forest are inventoried as roadless. The project area is all private land. The targeted property was logged historically by the Stimson Lumber Company, the current landowner. There are no water rights currently filed appurtenant to the property, therefore no water rights will transfer with acquisition. The property is fenced along the highway only. The property extends east and west of Hwy 279, in hunting districts 339 and 343, respectively.

A previous owner has retained all mineral rights on the property and holds a Reserved Restrictive Easement (RRE). The RRE restricts subdivision of the property. Unless the RRE is extinguished before FWP acquires the property, FWP will negotiate with the holder of the RRE and mineral rights to extinguish the RRE and acquire the mineral rights, thus unifying title.

The existing Canyon Creek WMA encompasses 2,361 acres, which provide yearlong habitat for elk, upland game birds, small mammals, and birds and seasonal habitat for deer, bear, forest carnivores, raptors, and endemic and neo-tropical migrant birds. Little Mill Creek, Big Mill Creek, and Sawmill Gulch flow through the eastern portion of the WMA and contain brook trout. These streams have been considered for westslope cutthroat trout restoration. Canyon Creek and Tar Head Creek flow through the western portion of the WMA and contain rainbow, brook, and native westslope cutthroat trout. Public recreation opportunities include hunting, fishing, wildlife viewing, hiking, horseback riding, and picnicking. Public access to adjacent public land (USFS, United States Bureau of Land Management [BLM], and Department of Natural Resources and Conservation [DNRC]) is also provided with this WMA. The existing WMA is also within hunting districts 339 and 343.

The vegetation of the targeted 729 acres is dominated by coniferous forest and upland grassland with some riparian areas. Timber was logged at least as recently as 2007. At the present time, Douglas fir and ponderosa pine are the predominant conifer species present. There are also some stands of lodgepole pine and limber pine. Some of the Douglas fir in the Flesher Pass area has died out, likely due to infestation of spruce

budworm. Specimen and Weino Creeks flow through the property to their confluences with Canyon Creek, which also flows through the property. This property provides habitat similar to the existing WMA. Although a thorough reconnaissance of the cover types has not been completed, it is likely that they are similar to the existing WMA.

On the existing WMA:

- Grasslands are dominated by rough fescue/Idaho fescue (*Festuca scabrella*/*Festuca idahoensis*) and Idaho fescue/bluebunch wheatgrass (*Festuca idahoensis*/*Agropyron spicatum*) with mountain big sagebrush (*Artemisia tridentata* *vaseyana*) interspersed in some areas.
- The most common forest cover type is Douglas-fir/rough fescue (*Pseudotsuga menziesii*/*Festuca scabrella*). This cover type occupies the majority of the WMA. Small areas of Douglas-fir/Idaho fescue (*Pseudotsuga menziesii*/*Festuca idahoensis*), Douglas-fir/elk sedge (*Pseudotsuga menziesii*/*Carex* spp.) and Douglas-fir/pinegrass (*Pseudotsuga menziesii*/*Calamagrostis rubescens*) also occur within the WMA.
- Riparian vegetation communities occur along the three creek drainages and are described by cover type below. Riparian is defined as sites that have permanent water tables at or near the surface for a significant period of the growing season. The dominant riparian cover type is the Douglas-fir/red-osier dogwood (*Pseudotsuga menziesii* /*Cornus canadensis*) type. This type is dominated by scattered Douglas fir, black cottonwood (*Populus trichocarpa*) and aspen (*P. tremuloides*) with an understory that includes red-osier dogwood, bebb's willow (*Salix bebbiana*), sandbar willow (*S. interior*), Douglas hawthorn (*Crataegus douglasii*), woodrose (*Rosa woodsii*), snowberry (*Symphoricarpos albus*), water birch (*Betula occidentalis*), and alder (*Alnus* spp.). A few sites may be classified marginally as the Englemann spruce/red-osier dogwood (*Picea engelmanni*) cover type. A few small sites lack conifer trees and could be classified as willow types. Most riparian areas in these units show signs of past livestock use that has resulted in reduced coverage of riparian species, browse lines on shrubs, and invasion by non-native plants especially Canada thistle (*Cirsium arvense*), Kentucky bluegrass (*Poa pratensis*), common tansy (*Tanacetum vulgare*), houndstongue (*Cynoglossum officinale*), and diffuse and spotted knapweed (*Centaurea diffusa*, *C. maculosa*).

The benefits of the additional property not only include increasing the amount of existing, contiguous protected wildlife habitat and further protection of a stream corridor containing native westslope cutthroat trout, but also include maintaining public access to public land in a strategic location. The following are details of the resource values FWP intends to conserve:

- Acquisition of this property would secure additional habitat and movement connectivity for wildlife across Hwy 279 between parcels of land owned by the USFS. Species of Concern (SOC) verified to occur in this vicinity include wolverine (*Gulo gulo*), Canada lynx (*Lynx Canadensis*), grizzly bear (*Ursus arctos*), pileated woodpecker (*Dryocopus pileatus*), golden eagle (*Aquila chrysaetos*), and westslope cutthroat trout (*Oncorhynchus clarki lewisi*). Unverified SOC for this area includes fisher (*Martes pennant*). No plant SOC were listed in the Natural Heritage Program database for this vicinity. A complete list of those species that are predicted to be present in the vicinity is included in Appendix A. This property is within an identified high-priority wildlife linkage area



along the Continental Divide. In that scope, this property is part of a larger landscape effort.

- The proposed acquisition would not only further protect the stream corridor from invasion by non-native fish species but may also expedite FWP's efforts to enhance and extend the current distribution of westslope cutthroat. Although not currently listed as a "Conservation Population," implementation of habitat improvement projects may be simplified if the lower portion of the stream was located on public land. Habitat improvements, such as barriers to prevent immigration of non-native rainbow and brook trout, stream bed restoration, or improvements to the riparian corridor, may allow additional treatment to improve the Specimen Creek and Weino Creek cutthroat populations and elevate the species' conservation status.
- Acquisition of this property would secure more direct public access to adjacent public lands in a strategic location for fishing, hunting, and other non-motorized recreation. The proposed acquisition would also maintain another point of public access to the northeast corner of the existing WMA (see Figure 1, above). Hunter use is expected to exceed 500 hunter days annually. Angler access would increase, and there would be additional fishing opportunity for brook trout and rainbow trout, both of which occur in Canyon Creek. At present, there are two points of public access to public land near the west side of Hwy 279 below Flesher Pass: one at the existing WMA and one at the larger parcel described in this proposal. Otherwise, public access to the Tar Head, Trout, Specimen, and Weino Creek drainages on the Helena National Forest is from above through the Stemple and Flesher Pass areas. This property would provide more direct public access to the Specimen and Weino Creek drainages from below. Finally, elk are harvested within the WMA and within the Specimen and Weino Creek drainages, and maintaining public access to this property would continue to disperse hunters across a broader area. Acquisition may also enhance FWP's ability to achieve population management objectives of wildlife (such as elk). This property would also allow hiking and wildlife viewing, and it is near the Continental Divide, which is a national scenic trail.

If the acquisition is completed, the additional 729 acres of the Canyon Creek WMA would be managed under the guidance of the Canyon Creek Wildlife Management Area Management Plan (2002; see Appendix C). Minimal development of public facilities, such as a parking area, is planned in order to maintain the undeveloped, primitive nature of the area. Below is a partial list of the laws governing the WMA; additional laws apply and may be found on FWP's website, [www.fwp.mt.gov](http://www.fwp.mt.gov) (by authority of MCA codes: 87-1-303, 87-6-201, and 87-5-402).

- Area closed to all public entry from December 2nd – May 15th. Area is otherwise open to all hunting seasons established by the FWP Commission.
- Motorized vehicles allowed on parking areas and the east-side main entry road to upper parking area only.
- Open to day-use only – No camping or overnight use is allowed.
- Cutting of standing trees or shrubs is prohibited – Gathering firewood for offsite use is prohibited.
- Damage, removal or defacing property is prohibited.
- Bear resistant food storage required.



- Weed-free feed required.
- Groups of 10 or more, and Commercial Use, require permits.
- Weapons discharge only allowed for lawful hunting purposes. Target practice and clay bird shooting prohibited.

9. Description and analysis of reasonable alternatives:

**Alternative A: No Action – FWP would not acquire the Specimen Creek Property**

Under the No Action Alternative, FWP would not accept a donation of the property from the RMEF. Eventually, the property would likely be sold to a private entity, and the opportunity for public access in this strategic location would be unlikely to be obtained by FWP through another property in the area.

**Alternative B: Proposed Action – For FWP to acquire the 729-acre Specimen Creek Property for addition to the Canyon Creek WMA**

Through the RMEF, FWP proposes to accept a donation of 729 acres in the Robert E. Lee Range both east and west of Hwy 279 northwest of Canyon Creek, Montana. The property includes portions of Specimen Creek and Weino Creek drainages as well as the confluences of these streams with Canyon Creek.

The property would be an addition to the existing Canyon Creek WMA. Therefore, the *Canyon Creek Wildlife Management Area Management Plan* (2002) would be the basis for management of the property (Appendix C).

No developments would be made within the property. Debris removal, parking area installation, parking area fencing, and barrier erection would be anticipated after acquisition to provide resource protection and for public safety. Boundary fencing or drift fencing (partial fencing to control livestock) may also be installed if deemed necessary and if it is determined that the benefits outweigh the cost, to provide resource protection. Adjacent to the west side of Hwy 279, FWP would establish one graveled, designated parking area to accommodate up to eight vehicles, including vehicles with horse trailers. FWP staff is consulting with MDT about this option and public use of the existing approaches. FWP would install appropriate signage at the new area if the acquisition is completed. FWP would consult with the State Historic Preservation Office (SHPO) prior to any ground disturbing activities.

A maintenance account using general hunting license funds would fund general management activities on the property, including weed control, parking lot development and maintenance, and fencing.

For the immediate future, no new FWP staff are planned to be hired to manage the property.

## **PART II. ENVIRONMENTAL REVIEW CHECKLIST**

The analysis of the physical and human environments discussed on the following pages is limited to Alternative B. The reason for this is that the potential impacts of the No Action alternative are difficult to define, because the final decision regarding the potential sale of the property is left to the discretion of the current owners. If the property is sold to a different buyer, existing wildlife habitat and water resources could be negatively affected depending on the actions of the new landowner. Subdivision is limited to construction of one residence and associated outbuildings within an 80-acre building site.

### **Evaluation of the impacts of the Proposed Action including secondary and cumulative impacts on the Physical and Human Environment.**

#### **A. PHYSICAL ENVIRONMENT**

1. <u>LAND RESOURCES</u> Will the proposed action result in:	IMPACT *					
	Unknown	None	Minor	Potentially Significant	Can Impact Be Mitigated	Comment Index
a. **Soil instability or changes in geologic substructure?		X				
b. Disruption, displacement, erosion, compaction, moisture loss, or over-covering of soil, which would reduce productivity or fertility?			X			1.b.
c. **Destruction, covering or modification of any unique geologic or physical features?		X				
d. Changes in siltation, deposition or erosion patterns that may modify the channel of a river or stream or the bed or shore of a lake?		X				
e. Exposure of people or property to earthquakes, landslides, ground failure, or other natural hazard?		X				

The proposed action will have no effect on existing soil stability, geologic substructure, or any unique geologic or physical features within the new WMA area.

1.b. If FWP acquires the property, establishing a parking area will require grading and/or soil movement, and gravel will be placed over the designated lot. The approach on the east side of the highway may be obliterated, especially if MDT determines that the approach is not acceptable for public use. FWP will consult with the SHPO prior to any ground disturbing activities. The parking area will require additional fencing and/or barriers to protect resource values and to reduce the possibility of pioneering roads. The fencing on the west side of the highway will need to be repaired in the near term or replaced (with fencing or a combination of fencing/gate and barriers).

FWP does not plan to maintain any routes on these parcels, except for the section from Hwy 287 across the bridge over Canyon Creek on the west side of the highway. The route would remain a primitive route.

Fencing, gates, and barriers at highway access points to these parcels will be maintained at all times. Fencing along other sections of the perimeter of the property will be maintained or installed when determined to be both necessary for resource protection and cost effective. The property has steep terrain, which makes boundary fence costly to install. FWP does not intend to allow livestock grazing on the property and would prefer to fence cattle out, and therefore the feasibility of drift fencing would be explored first.

2. <u>AIR</u> Will the proposed action result in:	IMPACT *					
	Unknown	None	Minor	Potentially Significant	Can Impact Be Mitigated	Comment Index
a. **Emission of air pollutants or deterioration of ambient air quality? (Also see 13 (c).)		X				
b. Creation of objectionable odors?		X				
c. Alteration of air movement, moisture, or temperature patterns or any change in climate, either locally or regionally?		X				
d. Adverse effects on vegetation, including crops, due to increased emissions of pollutants?		X				
e. ***For P-R/D-J projects, will the project result in any discharge, which will conflict with federal or state air quality regs? (Also see 2a.)		X				

The proposed action will have no effect on ambient air quality within the property. Motorized and wheeled vehicles will be required to travel on existing, authorized roads on the existing WMA (other than administrative use, no motorized travel will be authorized within this addition). Within the new WMA area, public parking is expected to be at the edge of the property adjacent to the west side of the highway, and public use will be restricted to walk-in use only from the parking area.

3. <u>WATER</u> Will the proposed action result in:	IMPACT *					
	Unknown	None	Minor	Potentially Significant	Can Impact Be Mitigated	Comment Index
a. *Discharge into surface water or any alteration of surface water quality including but not limited to temperature, dissolved oxygen or turbidity?		X				
b. Changes in drainage patterns or the rate and amount of surface runoff?		X				
c. Alteration of the course or magnitude of floodwater or other flows?		X				
d. Changes in the amount of surface water in any water body or creation of a new water body?		X				
e. Exposure of people or property to water related hazards such as flooding?		X				
f. Changes in the quality of groundwater?		X				
g. Changes in the quantity of groundwater?		X				
h. Increase in risk of contamination of surface or groundwater?		X				
i. Effects on any existing water right or reservation?		X				
j. Effects on other water users as a result of any alteration in surface or groundwater quality?		X				
k. Effects on other users as a result of any alteration in surface or groundwater quantity?		X				
l. ****For P-R/D-J, will the project affect a designated floodplain? (Also see 3c.)		N/A				
m. ***For P-R/D-J, will the project result in any discharge that will affect federal or state water quality regulations? (Also see 3a.)		N/A				

The proposed acquisition is not expected to affect the existing quality and quantity of Canyon Creek, Specimen Creek, or Weino Creek, because no disturbance of these creeks is planned by FWP. Canyon Creek, Specimen Creek, and Weino Creek are not part of a mapped floodplain.



4. <b>VEGETATION</b>  Will the proposed action result in?	IMPACT *					
	Unknown	None	Minor	Potentially Significant	Can Impact Be Mitigated	Comment Index
a. Changes in the diversity, productivity or abundance of plant species (including trees, shrubs, grass, crops, and aquatic plants)?		X				
b. Alteration of a plant community?		X				
c. Adverse effects on any unique, rare, threatened, or endangered species?		X				
d. Reduction in acreage or productivity of any agricultural land?		X				
e. Establishment or spread of noxious weeds?			X		Yes	4.e.
f. ****For P-R/D-J, will the project affect wetlands, or prime and unique farmland?		N/A				
g. Other:		X				

Under FWP management, wildlife and fisheries values would be protected, and where necessary, the productivity of soils, water, and vegetation would be improved while striving for maximum vegetation diversity dependent on soil types. There is no prime or unique farmland on the land.

4.e. FWP would document compliance with 7-22-2154, MCA, on weed inspections for land acquisitions. The property was inspected for noxious weeds by the county weed management district. Spotted knapweed, common mullein, musk and Canada thistle, and houndstongue were found throughout the property. Roadways, adjacent roads, timbered areas, and creek bottoms had infestations of noxious weeds. FWP would implement noxious weed management with guidance from the FWP *Statewide Integrated Noxious Weed Management Plan* (June 2008) and would utilize properly prescribed chemicals on a prioritized basis. Biological agents, mowing, pulling, and/or other methods would be researched and utilized where chemical control is inappropriate. Limitations on motorized use of the property would be implemented to minimize the introduction and spread of noxious weeds. Weed-seed free feeds for pack animals would be required.

<b>** 5. FISH/WILDLIFE</b>  <b>Will the proposed action result in:</b>	<b>IMPACT *</b>					
	<b>Unknown</b>	<b>None</b>	<b>Minor</b>	<b>Potentially Significant</b>	<b>Can Impact Be Mitigated</b>	<b>Comment Index</b>
a. Deterioration of critical fish or wildlife habitat?		X				
b. Changes in the diversity or abundance of game animals or bird species?		X				
c. Changes in the diversity or abundance of nongame species?		X				
d. Introduction of new species into an area?		X				
e. Creation of a barrier to the migration or movement of animals?		X				
f. Adverse effects on any unique, rare, threatened, or endangered species?		X				5.f.
g. Increase in conditions that stress wildlife populations or limit abundance (including harassment, legal or illegal harvest or other human activity)?			X			5.g.
h. ****For P-R/D-J, will the project be performed in any area in which T&E species are present, and will the project affect any T&E species or their habitat? (Also see 5f.)		N/A				
i. ***For P-R/D-J, will the project introduce or export any species not presently or historically occurring in the receiving location? (Also see 5d.)		N/A				

5.f. Species of Concern (SOC) that are verified in this vicinity include wolverine, Canada lynx, grizzly bear, pileated woodpecker, golden eagle, and westslope cutthroat trout. Unverified SOC for this area include fisher. No plant species were listed in the Natural Heritage Program database for this vicinity. Under FWP management, wildlife and fisheries values, including threatened and endangered species, will be protected, and where necessary, the productivity of soils, water, and vegetation will be improved while striving for maximum vegetation diversity dependent on soil types.

5.g. The property would be open to public access, hunting, fishing, and other non-motorized recreation consistent with a wildlife management area. Public use of nearby public lands (USFS and FWP) may increase slightly, due to greater visibility of the property as publicly accessible (the parcel would eventually be signed as the Canyon Creek WMA; Stimson Lumber Company has traditionally allowed public access to the property, except during periods of high fire danger, but that is not necessarily widely known). Therefore, wildlife may be stressed and dispersed in the immediate area. However, this impact is expected to be minor and consistent with FWP wildlife management. Further, the property is located adjacent to and near a large block of public land (BLM, USFS, and FWP) and private land with FWP conservation easements, which provide additional habitat for wildlife to disperse to (see Figure 1 above).

## B. HUMAN ENVIRONMENT

6. <u>NOISE/ELECTRICAL EFFECTS</u> Will the proposed action result in:	IMPACT *					
	Unknown	None	Minor	Potentially Significant	Can Impact Be Mitigated	Comment Index
a. Increases in existing noise levels?			X			6.a.
b. Exposure of people to severe or nuisance noise levels?		X				
c. Creation of electrostatic or electromagnetic effects that could be detrimental to human health or property?		X				
d. Interference with radio or television reception and operation?		X				

6.a. Because the property would continue to be open to public access and hunting, and more visibly open to such access with planned signing, there may be a slight increase in the discharge of firearms both on the property and on adjacent public land during hunting seasons. Therefore, there may be "nuisance noise" during hunting seasons. It is expected that this will be intermittent and dispersed over a large area, and therefore this impact is considered minor.

7. <b><u>LAND USE</u></b> Will the proposed action result in:	IMPACT *					
	Unknown	None	Minor	Potentially Significant	Can Impact Be Mitigated	Comment Index
a. Alteration of or interference with the productivity or profitability of the existing land use of an area?		X				
b. Conflicted with a designated natural area or area of unusual scientific or educational importance?		X				
c. Conflict with any existing land use whose presence would constrain or potentially prohibit the proposed action?		X				
d. Adverse effects on or relocation of residences?		X				

8. <b><u>RISK/HEALTH HAZARDS</u></b> Will the proposed action result in:	IMPACT *					
	Unknown	None	Minor	Potentially Significant	Can Impact Be Mitigated	Comment Index
a. Risk of an explosion or release of hazardous substances (including, but not limited to oil, pesticides, chemicals, or radiation) in the event of an accident or other forms of disruption?			X		Yes	8.a. & c.
b. Affect an existing emergency response or emergency evacuation plan, or create a need for a new plan?		X				
c. Creation of any human health hazard or potential hazard?			X		Yes	8.a. & c.
d. ***For P-R/D-J, will any chemical toxicants be used? (Also see 8a)		N/A				

8.a. & c. Chemical spraying is part of FWP's weed management plan to limit the infestation of noxious weeds on its properties per the guidance of the FWP *Statewide Integrated Noxious Weed Management Plan* (June 2008). Weed treatment and storage and mixing of the chemicals would be in accordance with standard operating procedures. Certified professionals will utilize permitted chemicals and apply them in accordance with product labels and as provided for under law.



9. <u>COMMUNITY IMPACT</u> Will the proposed action result in:	IMPACT *					
	Unknown	None	Minor	Potentially Significant	Can Impact Be Mitigated	Comment Index
a. Alteration of the location, distribution, density, or growth rate of the human population of an area?		X				
b. Alteration of the social structure of a community?		X				
c. Alteration of the level or distribution of employment or community or personal income?		X				
d. Changes in industrial or commercial activity?		X				
e. Increased traffic hazards or effects on existing transportation facilities or patterns of movement of people and goods?			X		Possibly	9.e.

The proposed action would have no effect on local communities or alter the distribution of population in the area. Expanding the Canyon Creek WMA through this proposed addition would provide additional access for hunting and other forms of recreation, which may provide a slight positive economic benefit to area businesses.

9.e. A new approach to the property may be pursued, if deemed necessary by the Montana Department of Transportation. A new parking area for public use for this portion of the WMA is expected to be established.

10. <u>PUBLIC SERVICES/TAXES/UTILITIES</u> Will the proposed action result in:	IMPACT *					
	Unknown	None	Minor	Potentially Significant	Can Impact Be Mitigated	Comment Index
a. Will the proposed action have an effect upon or result in a need for new or altered governmental services in any of the following areas: fire or police protection, schools, parks/recreational facilities, roads or other public maintenance, water supply, sewer or septic systems, solid waste disposal, health, or other governmental services? If any, specify:		X				
b. Will the proposed action have an effect upon the local or state tax base and revenues?		X				10.b.
c. Will the proposed action result in a need for new facilities or substantial alterations of any of the following utilities: electric power, natural gas, other fuel supply or distribution systems, or communications?		X				
d. Will the proposed action result in increased use of any energy source?		X				
e. **Define projected revenue sources		X				
f. **Define projected maintenance costs.			X			10.f.

10.b. The taxes for the property would be approximately \$550 annually. FWP is required by law to make tax payments to counties equal to the amount that a private landowner would be required to pay per Montana Code 87-1-603. There would be no change in taxes received by Lewis and Clark County as a result of the proposed action.

10.f. Initial Projected maintenance and improvement costs of approximately \$45,000 include weed management, signage, parking area installation, and fence installation/maintenance around the parking area.

** 11. <u>AESTHETICS/RECREATION</u> Will the proposed action result in:	IMPACT *					
	Unknown	None	Minor	Potentially Significant	Can Impact Be Mitigated	Comment Index
a. Alteration of any scenic vista or creation of an aesthetically offensive site or effect that is open to public view?		X				
b. Alteration of the aesthetic character of a community or neighborhood?		X				
c. **Alteration of the quality or quantity of recreational/tourism opportunities and settings? (Attach Tourism Report.)		X				
d. ***For P-R/D-J, will any designated or proposed wild or scenic rivers, trails or wilderness areas be impacted? (Also see 11a, 11c.)		N/A				

The proposed action may slightly increase local recreation, because the property will be in public ownership (public access will be maintained and the fact that the land is publicly accessible will be more visible) and is adjacent to additional public land (BLM, USFS, and FWP). The proposed action would have no affect on any scenic vista or the

viewshed of the area or other aesthetic character, because no major developments would be implemented on this property under FWP ownership and the viewshed would be protected in perpetuity.

12. <b>CULTURAL/HISTORICAL RESOURCES</b>  Will the proposed action result in:	IMPACT *					
	Unknown	None	Minor	Potentially Significant	Can Impact Be Mitigated	Comment Index
a. **Destruction or alteration of any site, structure or object of prehistoric historic, or paleontological importance?		X				12.a.
b. Physical change that would affect unique cultural values?		X				
c. Effects on existing religious or sacred uses of a site or area?		X				
d. ****For P-R/D-J, will the project affect historic or cultural resources? Attach SHPO letter of clearance. (Also see 12.a.)		N/A				

12.a. No destruction or alteration of any site, structure or object of prehistoric, historic, or paleontological importance is anticipated while under FWP ownership. FWP's proposed acquisition would have a positive effect on any cultural or historical resources by securing and managing them in public ownership. By Montana law (22-3-433 MCA), all state agencies are required to consult with the SHPO on the identification and location of heritage properties on land owned by the state that may be adversely impacted by a proposed action or development project (construction sites). Because FWP plans to establish a parking area, SHPO would be consulted. It is uncertain if unrecorded historic sites would be affected by the activities of an owner other than FWP.

## C. SIGNIFICANCE CRITERIA

13. <u>SUMMARY EVALUATION OF SIGNIFICANCE</u>  Will the proposed action, considered as a whole:	IMPACT *					
	Unknown	None	Minor	Potentially Significant	Can Impact Be Mitigated	Comment Index
a. Have impacts that are individually limited, but cumulatively considerable? (A project or program may result in impacts on two or more separate resources that create a significant effect when considered together or in total.)		X				
b. Involve potential risks or adverse effects, which are uncertain but extremely hazardous if they were to occur?		X				13.b.
c. Potentially conflict with the substantive requirements of any local, state, or federal law, regulation, standard or formal plan?		X				
d. Establish a precedent or likelihood that future actions with significant environmental impacts will be proposed?		X				
e. Generate substantial debate or controversy about the nature of the impacts that would be created?		X				
f. ***For P-R/D-J, is the project expected to have organized opposition or generate substantial public controversy? (Also see 13e.)		N/A				
g. ****For P-R/D-J, list any federal or state permits required.		N/A				

13.b. Chemical spraying is part of FWP's weed management plan to limit the infestation of noxious weeds on its properties per the guidance of the FWP *Statewide Integrated Noxious Weed Management Plan* (June 2008). Weed treatment and storage and mixing of the chemicals would be in accordance with standard operating procedures. Biological agents, mowing, pulling, and/or other methods would be researched and utilized where chemical control is inappropriate. Limitations on motorized use of the property would be implemented to minimize the introduction and spread of noxious weeds. Weed-seed free feeds for pack animals would be required.





**Evaluation and listing of mitigation, stipulation, or other control measures enforceable by the agency or another government agency:**

WMA Management: The existing *Canyon Creek Wildlife Management Area Management Plan* (2002) would be used to manage this property. FWP would document compliance with 7-22-2154, MCA, on weed inspections for land acquisitions. The property was inspected for noxious weeds by the county weed management district. FWP will implement noxious weed management with guidance from the FWP *Statewide Integrated Noxious Weed Management Plan* (June 2008) and will utilize properly prescribed chemicals on a prioritized basis. Biological agents, mowing, pulling, and/or other methods would be researched and utilized where chemical control is inappropriate. Limitations on motorized use of the property would be implemented to minimize the introduction and spread of noxious weeds. Weed-seed free feeds would be required.

Historic Sites: By Montana law (22-3-433 MCA), all state agencies are required to consult with the SHPO on the identification and location of heritage properties on lands owned by the state that may be adversely impacted by a proposed action or development project (construction sites). Because FWP would plan to establish a parking area, FWP would consult with SHPO for a cultural resource file search regarding this proposed acquisition.

**PART III. NARRATIVE EVALUATION AND COMMENT**

The property is primarily being pursued because it would be a valuable addition to the Canyon Creek WMA, securing additional habitat for many species, including elk, mule deer, moose, bears, wolves, and wolverine. Acquisition may also enhance FWP's ability to achieve population management objectives of wildlife (such as elk), by maintaining hunting access in a strategic location, and may also expedite FWP's efforts to further enhance and extend the current distribution of westslope cutthroat. This acquisition would maintain public access into both the Specimen and Weino Creek drainages from below. FWP ownership would secure this habitat and public access in perpetuity. No subdivision or development would occur on the land. Through noxious weed management, habitat quality may improve over time by reducing the quantity and abundance of noxious weeds that currently exist on the property.

## **PART IV. PUBLIC PARTICIPATION**

### **1. Public involvement:**

Scoping was completed in July 2016 in order to consider public concerns in this EA.

Additional opportunity for public participation was available this past fall (2015), when the Montana Fish and Wildlife Conservation Trust issued a request for public comment, and public participation was also afforded in early summer 2016 as part of the application process for funding through the Lewis and Clark County Open Lands Program (30-day comment period followed by a public hearing).

The public will be notified in the following manners to comment on this EA, the proposed action, and the alternative:

- Two public notices in each of these papers: *Helena Independent Record* and *Bozeman Chronicle*.
- Direct mailing to adjacent landowners and interested parties to ensure their knowledge of the proposed project;
- Public notice on the Fish, Wildlife & Parks web page: <http://fwp.mt.gov> – Public Notices

Copies of this EA will be available for public review at the FWP Helena Area Resource Office in Helena, the Regional Headquarters in Bozeman, and on the FWP website.

A public meeting will be held on September 1, 2016, at 6 p.m. in the FWP Commission Room at the FWP Headquarters in Helena to provide the public a venue to submit comments and have questions answered by FWP staff. This level of public notice and participation is appropriate for a project of this scope having few limited physical and human impacts.

### **2. Duration of comment period:**

The public comment period will extend for 30 days following the posting of this EA on the FWP website. **Written comments will be accepted until 5:00 p.m., September 9, 2016** and can be mailed to the address below:

Montana Fish, Wildlife & Parks  
Helena Area Resource Office  
**Attn: Canyon Creek WMA Addition – Specimen Creek Proposal**  
PO Box 200701  
Helena, MT 59620

or email comments with subject line **Canyon Creek WMA Addition – Specimen Creek Proposal** to [jsika@mt.gov](mailto:jsika@mt.gov).

## **PART V. EA PREPARATION**

### **1. Based on the significance criteria evaluated in this EA, is an EIS required? (YES/NO)? No**

**If an EIS is not required, explain why the EA is the appropriate level of analysis for this proposed action.**

An EIS is not required. Based on the assessment above, which has identified a very limited number of minor impacts from the proposed action, an EIS is not required and an environmental assessment is the appropriate level of review.

**2. Person(s) responsible for preparing the EA:**

Jenny Sika, FWP R3 Wildlife Biologist, Helena, MT  
Eric Roberts, FWP R4 Fisheries Biologist, Helena, MT  
Linnaea Schroeer, FWP MEPA Coordinator, Helena, MT

**3. List of agencies or offices consulted during preparation of the EA:**

Montana Fish, Wildlife & Parks:  
Design and Construction Bureau, Helena  
Fisheries Bureau, Helena Area Resource Office  
Habitat Bureau, Helena  
Lands Bureau, Helena  
Legal Bureau, Helena  
Wildlife Bureau, Helena Area Resource Office, Montana State Library, & Bozeman  
Montana Natural Heritage Program, Helena MT

## **APPENDICES**

A – Predicted Species List

B – Tourism Report

C – *Canyon Creek WMA Management Plan* (2002) – **Please note that this is a separate document of this EA available on the FWP website:**

***CanyonCrWMA\_Add\_SpecimenCreek\_AppC.pdf***. If you would like a printed copy, please call the Helena Area Resource Office at (406) 495-3260 to request that one be mailed to you.

## APPENDIX A: PREDICTED SPECIES LIST

Table 1. List of species predicted to be present in the vicinity of the proposed Canyon Creek WMA Addition property. Prepared by FWP Data Services, 2010.

<b>Common Name</b>	<b>Scientific Name</b>
Long-toed Salamander	<i>Ambystoma macrodactylum</i>
Rocky Mountain Tailed Frog	<i>Ascaphus montanus</i>
Western Toad	<i>Bufo boreas</i>
Boreal Chorus Frog	<i>Pseudacris maculata</i>
Plains Spadefoot	<i>Spea bombifrons</i>
Northern Leopard Frog	<i>Rana pipiens</i>
Columbia Spotted Frog	<i>Rana luteiventris</i>
Harlequin Duck	<i>Histrionicus histrionicus</i>
Turkey Vulture	<i>Cathartes aura</i>
Northern Harrier	<i>Circus cyaneus</i>
Sharp-shinned Hawk	<i>Accipiter striatus</i>
Cooper's Hawk	<i>Accipiter cooperii</i>
Red-tailed Hawk	<i>Buteo jamaicensis</i>
Rough-legged Hawk	<i>Buteo lagopus</i>
Golden Eagle	<i>Aquila chrysaetos</i>
American Kestrel	<i>Falco sparverius</i>
Merlin	<i>Falco columbarius</i>
Peregrine Falcon	<i>Falco peregrinus</i>
Gyr Falcon	<i>Falco rusticolus</i>
Prairie Falcon	<i>Falco mexicanus</i>
Gray Partridge	<i>Perdix perdix</i>
Spruce Grouse	<i>Falcipennis canadensis</i>
Dusky Grouse	<i>Dendragapus obscurus</i>
Ruffed Grouse	<i>Bonasa umbellus</i>
Greater Sage-Grouse	<i>Centrocercus urophasianus</i>
Sharp-tailed Grouse (Columbian)	<i>Tympanuchus phasianellus columbianus</i>
Sharp-tailed Grouse (Plains)	<i>Tympanuchus phasianellus jamesi</i>
Wild Turkey	<i>Meleagris gallopavo</i>
Mourning Dove	<i>Zenaida macroura</i>
Black-billed Cuckoo	<i>Coccyzus erythrophthalmus</i>
Flammulated Owl	<i>Otus flammeolus</i>
Western Screech-Owl	<i>Megascops kennicottii</i>
Great Horned Owl	<i>Bubo virginianus</i>
Snowy Owl	<i>Bubo scandiacus</i>
Northern Pygmy-Owl	<i>Glaucidium gnoma</i>
Burrowing Owl	<i>Athene cunicularia</i>
Barred Owl	<i>Strix varia</i>

Table 1 continued.

<b>Common Name</b>	<b>Scientific Name</b>
Great Gray Owl	<i>Strix nebulosa</i>
Long-eared Owl	<i>Asio otus</i>
Short-eared Owl	<i>Asio flammeus</i>
Boreal Owl	<i>Aegolius funereus</i>
Northern Saw-whet Owl	<i>Aegolius acadicus</i>
Common Nighthawk	<i>Chordeiles minor</i>
Common Poorwill	<i>Phalaenoptilus nuttallii</i>
Vaux's Swift	<i>Chaetura vauxi</i>
Calliope Hummingbird	<i>Stellula calliope</i>
Rufous Hummingbird	<i>Selasphorus rufus</i>
Belted Kingfisher	<i>Megaceryle alcyon</i>
Lewis's Woodpecker	<i>Melanerpes lewis</i>
Williamson's Sapsucker	<i>Sphyrapicus thyroideus</i>
Red-naped Sapsucker	<i>Sphyrapicus nuchalis</i>
Downy Woodpecker	<i>Picoides pubescens</i>
Hairy Woodpecker	<i>Picoides villosus</i>
American Three-toed Woodpecker	<i>Picoides dorsalis</i>
Northern Flicker	<i>Colaptes auratus</i>
Pileated Woodpecker	<i>Dryocopus pileatus</i>
Olive-sided Flycatcher	<i>Contopus cooperi</i>
Western Wood-Pewee	<i>Contopus sordidulus</i>
Willow Flycatcher	<i>Empidonax traillii</i>
Hammond's Flycatcher	<i>Empidonax hammondi</i>
Dusky Flycatcher	<i>Empidonax oberholseri</i>
Cordilleran Flycatcher	<i>Empidonax occidentalis</i>
Say's Phoebe	<i>Sayornis saya</i>
Western Kingbird	<i>Tyrannus verticalis</i>
Eastern Kingbird	<i>Tyrannus tyrannus</i>
Tree Swallow	<i>Tachycineta bicolor</i>
Violet-green Swallow	<i>Tachycineta thalassina</i>
Cliff Swallow	<i>Petrochelidon pyrrhonota</i>
Barn Swallow	<i>Hirundo rustica</i>
Gray Jay	<i>Perisoreus canadensis</i>
Steller's Jay	<i>Cyanocitta stelleri</i>
Clark's Nutcracker	<i>Nucifraga columbiana</i>
Black-billed Magpie	<i>Pica hudsonia</i>
American Crow	<i>Corvus brachyrhynchos</i>

Table 1 continued.

<b>Common Name</b>	<b>Scientific Name</b>
Common Raven	<i>Corvus corax</i>
Black-capped Chickadee	<i>Poecile atricapillus</i>
Mountain Chickadee	<i>Poecile gambeli</i>
Boreal Chickadee	<i>Poecile hudsonica</i>
Red-breasted Nuthatch	<i>Sitta canadensis</i>
White-breasted Nuthatch	<i>Sitta carolinensis</i>
Pygmy Nuthatch	<i>Sitta pygmaea</i>
Brown Creeper	<i>Certhia americana</i>
House Wren	<i>Troglodytes aedon</i>
American Dipper	<i>Cinclus mexicanus</i>
Golden-crowned Kinglet	<i>Regulus satrapa</i>
Ruby-crowned Kinglet	<i>Regulus calendula</i>
Western Bluebird	<i>Sialia mexicana</i>
Mountain Bluebird	<i>Sialia currucoides</i>
Townsend's Solitaire	<i>Myadestes townsendi</i>
Swainson's Thrush	<i>Catharus ustulatus</i>
Hermit Thrush	<i>Catharus guttatus</i>
American Robin	<i>Turdus migratorius</i>
Gray Catbird	<i>Dumetella carolinensis</i>
Sage Thrasher	<i>Oreoscoptes montanus</i>
Brown Thrasher	<i>Toxostoma rufum</i>
Sprague's Pipit	<i>Anthus spragueii</i>
Bohemian Waxwing	<i>Bombycilla garrulus</i>
Cedar Waxwing	<i>Bombycilla cedrorum</i>
Northern Shrike	<i>Lanius excubitor</i>
Loggerhead Shrike	<i>Lanius ludovicianus</i>
Warbling Vireo	<i>Vireo gilvus</i>
Solitary Vireo	<i>Vireo solitarius</i>
Orange-crowned Warbler	<i>Vermivora celata</i>
Yellow Warbler	<i>Dendroica petechia</i>
Yellow-rumped Warbler	<i>Dendroica coronata</i>
Townsend's Warbler	<i>Dendroica townsendi</i>
American Redstart	<i>Setophaga ruticilla</i>
Northern Waterthrush	<i>Seiurus noveboracensis</i>
MacGillivray's Warbler	<i>Oporornis tolmiei</i>
Common Yellowthroat	<i>Geothlypis trichas</i>
Wilson's Warbler	<i>Wilsonia pusilla</i>



Table 1 continued.

<b>Common Name</b>	<b>Scientific Name</b>
Western Tanager	<i>Piranga ludoviciana</i>
Black-headed Grosbeak	<i>Pheucticus melanocephalus</i>
Lazuli Bunting	<i>Passerina amoena</i>
Indigo Bunting	<i>Passerina cyanea</i>
Green-tailed Towhee	<i>Pipilo chlorurus</i>
Spotted Towhee	<i>Pipilo maculatus</i>
American Tree Sparrow	<i>Spizella arborea</i>
Chipping Sparrow	<i>Spizella passerina</i>
Clay-colored Sparrow	<i>Spizella pallida</i>
Brewer's Sparrow	<i>Spizella breweri</i>
Vesper Sparrow	<i>Pooecetes gramineus</i>
Lark Sparrow	<i>Chondestes grammacus</i>
Lark Bunting	<i>Calamospiza melanocorys</i>
Savannah Sparrow	<i>Passerculus sandwichensis</i>
Grasshopper Sparrow	<i>Ammodramus savannarum</i>
Fox Sparrow	<i>Passerella iliaca</i>
Song Sparrow	<i>Melospiza melodia</i>
Lincoln's Sparrow	<i>Melospiza lincolnii</i>
White-throated Sparrow	<i>Zonotrichia albicollis</i>
Harris's Sparrow	<i>Zonotrichia querula</i>
Dark-eyed Junco	<i>Junco hyemalis</i>
McCown's Longspur	<i>Calcarius mccownii</i>
Lapland Longspur	<i>Calcarius lapponicus</i>
Chestnut-collared Longspur	<i>Calcarius ornatus</i>
Snow Bunting	<i>Plectrophenax nivalis</i>
Bobolink	<i>Dolichonyx oryzivorus</i>
Western Meadowlark	<i>Sturnella neglecta</i>
Brewer's Blackbird	<i>Euphagus cyanocephalus</i>
Brown-headed Cowbird	<i>Molothrus ater</i>
Pine Grosbeak	<i>Pinicola enucleator</i>
Purple Finch	<i>Carpodacus purpureus</i>
Cassin's Finch	<i>Carpodacus cassinii</i>
House Finch	<i>Carpodacus mexicanus</i>
Red Crossbill	<i>Loxia curvirostra</i>
White-winged Crossbill	<i>Loxia leucoptera</i>
Common Redpoll	<i>Carduelis flammea</i>
Hoary Redpoll	<i>Carduelis hornemanni</i>

Table 1 continued.

<b>Common Name</b>	<b>Scientific Name</b>
Pine Siskin	<i>Carduelis pinus</i>
American Goldfinch	<i>Carduelis tristis</i>
Evening Grosbeak	<i>Coccothraustes vespertinus</i>
Masked Shrew	<i>Sorex cinereus</i>
Vagrant Shrew	<i>Sorex vagrans</i>
Dusky or Montane Shrew	<i>Sorex monticolus</i>
Water Shrew	<i>Sorex palustris</i>
Little Brown Myotis	<i>Myotis lucifugus</i>
Yuma Myotis	<i>Myotis yumanensis</i>
Long-eared Myotis	<i>Myotis evotis</i>
Fringed Myotis	<i>Myotis thysanodes</i>
Long-legged Myotis	<i>Myotis volans</i>
California Myotis	<i>Myotis californicus</i>
Western Small-footed Myotis	<i>Myotis ciliolabrum</i>
Silver-haired Bat	<i>Lasionycteris noctivagans</i>
Big Brown Bat	<i>Eptesicus fuscus</i>
Hoary Bat	<i>Lasiurus cinereus</i>
Townsend's Big-eared Bat	<i>Corynorhinus townsendii</i>
Pika	<i>Ochotona princeps</i>
Mountain Cottontail	<i>Sylvilagus nuttallii</i>
Snowshoe Hare	<i>Lepus americanus</i>
White-tailed Jack Rabbit	<i>Lepus townsendii</i>
Yellow-pine Chipmunk	<i>Tamias amoenus</i>
Red-tailed Chipmunk	<i>Tamias ruficaudus</i>
Yellow-bellied Marmot	<i>Marmota flaviventris</i>
Richardson's Ground Squirrel	<i>Spermophilus richardsonii</i>
Columbian Ground Squirrel	<i>Spermophilus columbianus</i>
Golden-mantled Ground Squirrel	<i>Spermophilus lateralis</i>
Red Squirrel	<i>Tamiasciurus hudsonicus</i>
Northern Flying Squirrel	<i>Glaucomys sabrinus</i>
Northern Pocket Gopher	<i>Thomomys talpoides</i>
Beaver	<i>Castor canadensis</i>
Deer Mouse	<i>Peromyscus maniculatus</i>
Northern Grasshopper Mouse	<i>Onychomys leucogaster</i>
Bushy-tailed Woodrat	<i>Neotoma cinerea</i>
Southern Red-backed Vole	<i>Clethrionomys gapperi</i>
Heather Vole	<i>Phenacomys intermedius</i>
Meadow Vole	<i>Microtus pennsylvanicus</i>

Table 1 continued.

<b>Common Name</b>	<b>Scientific Name</b>
Montane Vole	<i>Microtus montanus</i>
Long-tailed Vole	<i>Microtus longicaudus</i>
Water Vole	<i>Microtus richardsoni</i>
Sagebrush Vole	<i>Lemmiscus curtatus</i>
Muskrat	<i>Ondatra zibethicus</i>
Western Jumping Mouse	<i>Zapus princeps</i>
Porcupine	<i>Erethizon dorsatum</i>
Coyote	<i>Canis latrans</i>
Red Fox	<i>Vulpes vulpes</i>
Swift Fox	<i>Vulpes velox</i>
Black Bear	<i>Ursus americanus</i>
Raccoon	<i>Procyon lotor</i>
Marten	<i>Martes americana</i>
Fisher	<i>Martes pennanti</i>
Short-tailed Weasel	<i>Mustela erminea</i>
Least Weasel	<i>Mustela nivalis</i>
Long-tailed Weasel	<i>Mustela frenata</i>
Mink	<i>Mustela vison</i>
Wolverine	<i>Gulo gulo</i>
Badger	<i>Taxidea taxus</i>
Striped Skunk	<i>Mephitis mephitis</i>
Northern River Otter	<i>Lontra canadensis</i>
Canada Lynx	<i>Lynx canadensis</i>
Bobcat	<i>Lynx rufus</i>
Mountain Lion	<i>Puma concolor</i>
Elk or Wapiti	<i>Cervus canadensis</i>
Mule Deer	<i>Odocoileus hemionus</i>
White-tailed Deer	<i>Odocoileus virginianus</i>
Moose	<i>Alces alces</i>
Pronghorn	<i>Antilocapra americana</i>
Painted Turtle	<i>Chrysemys picta</i>
Greater Short-horned Lizard	<i>Phrynosoma hernandesi</i>
Rubber Boa	<i>Charina bottae</i>
Eastern Racer	<i>Coluber constrictor</i>
Gophersnake	<i>Pituophis catenifer</i>
Terrestrial Gartersnake	<i>Thamnophis elegans</i>
Common Gartersnake	<i>Thamnophis sirtalis</i>
Prairie Rattlesnake	<i>Crotalus viridis</i>

## APPENDIX B: TOURISM REPORT

# TOURISM REPORT

## MONTANA ENVIRONMENTAL POLICY ACT (MEPA) & MCA 23-1-110

The Montana Department of Fish, Wildlife and Parks has initiated the review process as mandated by MCA 23-1-110 and the Montana Environmental Policy Act in its consideration of the project described below. As part of the review process, input and comments are being solicited. Please complete the project name and project description portions and submit this form to:

Carol Crockett, Tourism Development Specialist  
Travel Montana-Department of Commerce  
301 S. Park Ave.  
Helena, MT 59601

**Project Name:** Canyon Creek Wildlife Management Area Addition – Specimen Creek

**Project Description:** The 729-acre Specimen Creek Property would be an addition to the Canyon Creek Wildlife Management Area northwest of Helena. The draft Environmental Assessment will be out for public review in August 2016.

1. Would this site development project have an impact on the tourism economy?  
NO ☒ YES If YES, briefly describe:

This project may have a slight, positive impact on the tourism economy. Once this property is in FWP ownership, it will be signed, which will raise the profile of the property and may increase use by the public. It is already publicly accessible thanks to Stimson Lumber, but that may not be widely known.

2. Does this impending improvement alter the quality or quantity of recreation/tourism opportunities and settings?  
NO ☒ YES If YES, briefly describe:

This project may have a slight, positive impact on the tourism economy. Once this property is in FWP ownership, it will be signed, which will raise the profile of the property and may increase use by the public. It is already publicly accessible thanks to Stimson Lumber, but that may not be widely known. In addition, FWP would plan to install a parking area, which would make parking off the highway easier for most vehicle types, which may also increase public use.

Signature\_\_\_\_\_ Date\_\_\_\_\_

APPENDIX C: *CANYON CREEK WMA MANAGEMENT PLAN* (2002)

**Please note that this is a separate document of this EA available on the FWP website: *CanyonCrWMA\_Add\_SpecimenCreek\_AppC.pdf*.** If you would like a printed copy, please call the Helena Area Resource Office at (406) 495-3260 to request that one be mailed to you.